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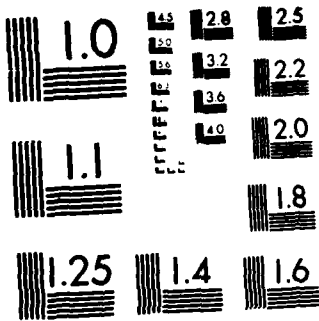
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DA CIVILIANS IN EUROPE: FIRST AID FOR
WARTIME COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT IN EUROPE?

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

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ABSTRACT

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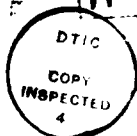
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This article looks at a possible solution to help overcome the impact of time to deploy CONUS-based Combat Service Support (CSS) forces to the European Theater during the first few critical weeks of the next war. As of 30 September 1987, there were about 8617 Department of the Army Civilians (DAC) assigned to U.S. Army, Europe. (USAREUR). However, only about 2000 are categorized as Emergency Essential employees considered essential to support theater mobilization and wartime missions. The remaining employees are expected to depart the theater in accordance with established Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) rules. Many of these personnel have skills, knowledges and abilities that can be utilized to operate essential military support systems or, as a minimum, provide for a quicker theater transition from forward deployed to fully mobilized status.

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INTRODUCTION

The time is now. Warsaw Pact countries have fully mobilized; their machines of war are advancing into the Federal Republic of Germany. NATO allies have had less than 24 hours notice of the impending attack; allied forces have begun movement to, or are already in their defensive positions. Their mission is clear: blunt the advances of the opposing forces and hold until reinforcements arrive, the bulk of those coming from CONUS.

While the scenario described above is possible, probability would be another issue for discussion. It has been documented in many books and articles that the most critical aspect for allied success is the arrival of additional forces on the battlefield. Battlefield attrition and the sheer size of the forces employed by the aggressor require speedy reinforcement and deployment of arriving forces. It is approximately 6,000 km from the shores of North America to the European Theater of Operations, but only about 650 km from the western borders of the Soviet Union to the Inner German Border. Clearly, Warsaw Pact countries have the advantage of time/distance to deploy additional forces.¹ As explained by Donald Rumsfeld, a former Secretary of Defense:

The force balance (between NATO and the Warsaw Pact) reaches an acceptable level of risk with the arrival of U.S. reinforcements, but only after a very critical period in the first few days when the force ratio could reach dangerously high levels.²

This situation still exists today. The United States Army has just over 40% of its divisional combat forces forward deployed in Europe in peacetime. The additional forces are expected to deploy by M+10,

thus leaving a critical gap when all available in-country manpower resources will be needed.³ Also, one must also consider that any amount of reinforcements would be useless unless the current on-site forces are able to defend and contain the attacking force.⁴ It would appear, therefore, that the United States has accepted a degree of risk by placing such reliance on CONUS-based reinforcements.

In his book, *Red Storm Rising*, author Tom Clancy cites a major concern of both the NATO alliance and the Soviet Union: "The key, of course, is how quickly NATO can reach full readiness." Probably the single most important aspect of NATO readiness is the ability of the United States to mobilize and deploy additional personnel and materiel from CONUS. There are many variables that enter into that equation including such things as: timeliness of the initial alert, show rate of reserve forces, equipment/materiel readiness, transport availability and air and sea security between CONUS and Europe. Given the size of the opposing force, it can be expected that the most demanding wartime scenario for the United States, in terms of manpower, would be a surprise attack by Warsaw Pact countries.⁵ While it is generally known that the U.S. has a great deal of prepositioned equipment available in the European theater, it is equally apparent that little of this equipment will be able to exert force on the enemy unless sufficient manpower arrives to operate and maintain it.

It is during this "very critical period" that I propose the use of existing in-country Department of the Army Civilian (DAC) employees to provide some of the myriad of Combat Service Support (CSS) and other related administrative efforts needed to sustain forward deployed and arriving combat forces. A significant number of U.S. civilian

employees would not be evacuated in order to increase the projection of combat power of U.S. and allied forces should a no notice, or short alert, war break out in the European Theater. This civilian component would be specifically targeted toward offsetting the recognized shortage of active component CSS forces in theater. During testimony, in December 1985, to the Senate Armed Services Committee, General Bernard Rogers, the former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe said "we don't have sufficient combat service support forces to support our forward deployed forces in Europe."⁶ This offset would be accomplished by assigning DAC personnel to Mobilization Tables of Distribution and Allowances (MOBTDA) to perform functions that would: either relieve a military person of that same function (for reassignment to other more critical duties) or later be done by CSS units deploying from CONUS. The latter could very likely be a short term assignment or "ramp up" that would also assist in transitioning arriving units from CONUS to the theater of operations. Involvement of these personnel in wartime planning and execution could also have other "spin-off" effects in peacetime. In this manner, having accepted the risk associated with CONUS-based reinforcements, the US Army could reduce risk without adversely impacting other mobilization and deployment actions.

BACKGROUND

The Army of today relies heavily on reserve forces to provide tactical support in time of war. Both the 88-92 Army Program, and the Fiscal Year (FY) 88 U.S. Army Posture Statement indicate that over 60% of all combat service support is located in the reserve component. In USAREUR, a number of CSS units that will be assigned to support

current in-theater combat forces during wartime are located in the CONUS reserve structure. This shortfall has been the result of efforts by military planners to change the "tooth to tail" ratio in favor of more forward deployed combat troops while living within an almost constant military active component endstrength.⁷ This trend is amplified in the European theater by the existence of a Congressionally imposed troop strength ceiling which caps total active Army end strength in Europe at 216,779 in FY 89.⁸ New combat force initiatives in USAREUR have been largely resourced by pushing a significant amount of wartime CSS responsibility down to the reserve component. This shift in the force structure, by itself, is not the sole cause for concern. What does concern military planners is the location of those CSS units in relation to where the next battle is to be fought and the risks associated with their deployability. The amount of forward deployed Army forces based in Europe would seem to bear witness to a belief that this is where the U.S. perceives the greatest threat to her national interests lie. Problems related to mobilization and reinforcement are shared by both sides. But, the Warsaw Pact forces possess three very important advantages. First, they will most likely cause the event, or series of events, that will lead to a decision to mobilize NATO forces. This will give them the advantage of sufficient time to put their mobilization plans in motion. Second, they maintain a larger forward deployed force structure to commit to their offensive. Finally, while they will also require some time for their reserve forces to deploy, Warsaw Pact countries are joined by contiguous lines of communications. NATO forces must rely, in large part, in the security of their principal lines of communication. As a minimum, air and sea superiority of the

Atlantic Ocean area and the English Channel must be assured. Therefore, NATO forces must develop new ways to reach parity with Warsaw Pact plans and resources.⁹

Approximately 28% of all active Army forces are stationed in Europe.¹⁰ During peacetime operations, a significant amount of logistical support to those forces is accomplished by a mixture of civilian (predominantly local national) hires and contractors. At the outset of mobilization, or war, CSS responsibilities and other related general and administrative functions are shared by current in-country military, emergency essential (EE) civilians, and the host nation. Pending the arrival of additional forces from CONUS, these are the resources available to the Theater Commander to support combat operations.

CURRENT SITUATION

The mission of the military component of U.S. personnel stationed overseas is clear....to fight, or support those engaged in the fight. Less clear is the mission of the civilian component; some employees will remain behind as emergency essential (EE) personnel while the majority of employees, and all dependents, are evacuated to be returned to some safe haven somewhere...presumably the United States. A Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) order will be issued that is designed to route personnel to designated ports of embarkation (POE).¹¹ Authorities envision timely withdrawal of Army civilian employees, and their dependents, from the theater of operations to other locations where their skills might be needed. Personnel offices in Europe are charged with the responsibility for identifying returning employees to CONUS personnel offices in order to

find them suitable positions and help meet mobilization requirements in the U.S.. However, the report from a civilian mini-mobilization exercise, conducted in CONUS in 1985, indicated that no DOD-wide system existed to identify the skills of those returning employees, and their final CONUS assignment.¹²

The evacuation of Army civilian employees represents a potentially serious drain of valuable manpower resources to the theater. These personnel could be very useful in assisting in the process of transition to war, particularly in carrying out duties relating to the performance of CSS and other administrative and support functions assigned to various levels in the theater of operations. The size of the active Army force is fixed, both those troops available in Europe, as well as those that will immediately deploy from CONUS. The reserve forces are also somewhat static, and are subject to factors such as ability of reservists to report upon an order to mobilize, equipment readiness, and transport availability. While actions are currently ongoing to find the most cost and operationally attractive mix of AC/RC structure, it's probably time to look at other alternatives to decrease the impact of the CSS deployment problem and available in-theater resources. This alternative must, by design, be able to use resources that already exist in the European theater of operations. This is a critical assumption if NATO forces are to be successful in holding on until sufficient reinforcements from CONUS become available. Traditional arguments against using civilians to bridge the gap must be re-looked and some changes in policy and thinking may have to be made.

Today's Army is technology rich. New weapons systems, and the

numerous support systems they require, are often state-of-the-art developments needing highly trained, and specialized, operators and maintenance personnel. But it is also fair to say that a number of general administrative and support personnel are needed too. A number of the tasks performed by these personnel are similar to those performed by civilians in peacetime operations.¹³

Military manpower constraints have led DOD to rely increasingly on federal civilian employees... The majority of these civilians provide services directly related to the readiness of operational forces in such areas as logistics, communications, medicine, and maintenance of ships, aircraft, and weapons systems.¹⁴

The U.S. civilian workforce employed in Europe is comprised of many different occupational specialties. The employees in those specialties possess many of the same skills required to perform a number of the duties found in CSS units.

THE CIVILIAN COMPONENT

U.S. Army Civilian employees are the important third leg of the Total Army triad. Civilian employees account for almost 21% of the Total Army strength (active plus reserve component military). The U.S. Army uses civilian manpower (including in-house and contract) to free up military personnel to perform military functions. There are inherent advantages to this policy. First, it allows the Army more flexibility to operate within the 772,000 military end strength ceiling by converting military in TDA positions, performing peacetime functions, to the warfighting TOE force and backfilling their former positions with in-house civilian employees or a contractor workforce. Secondly, the civilian workforce provides a linkage of continuity that helps to overcome the effects of routine turnover when those positions

are occupied by military personnel.¹⁵

As of 30 September 1987, there were 8,617 DA Civilian (DAC) employees assigned in Europe. Currently, almost 1,100 civilian spaces are documented on MOBTDA's with over 2,000 civilians actually assigned to emergency essential positions.¹⁶ Emergency essential (EE) personnel are direct hire civilian employees who occupy an overseas position that is considered essential to support the mobilization and wartime mission of the command. These personnel fill positions that are categorized as EE because:

- a. no qualified and immediate replacement exists and
- b. not having them filled would:
 - (1) impair the effective operation of essential military support systems or
 - (2) adversely impact¹⁷ on the combat mission of deployed forces.

The USAREUR civilian workforce is made up of employees possessing a multitude of differing knowledges, skills and abilities. However, one trait they all possess in common is their ability to work and live in a foreign country. Based on more than eight years of living and working (for the US Army) in the Federal Republic of Germany, I have observed some trends concerning DAC personnel assigned overseas. Many civilian employees have "roots" in Europe; they own property and/or have native born spouses. It appears to me that some doubt exists that many of these personnel would leave Europe willingly in time of mobilization or war. These employees, plus those that have spent a significant amount of time in Europe, have gained a great deal of knowledge about European culture and customs, are familiar with European lines of communication, and normally possess a working knowledge of the host country language. In some respects, this could

make them a more valuable asset than the troops that are deploying from CONUS. I have reached this conclusion by observing the attitudes of soldiers assigned to US Army, Europe, for the first time. Confusion and low morale may result from acts as simple as attempting to understand German road signs, talking to host country personnel or using the telephone. During time of crisis it is likely that any or all of these actions could take place. Personnel who are already stationed in Europe do not have to contend with these inconveniences and would be able to concentrate more intently on their primary mission.

ISSUES

There are several issues that must be addressed regarding the use of civilian employees during time of crisis. Some of these concerns are based on the differences between the military component and civilian employees in general. First, civilians are classified as noncombatants who hold their jobs voluntarily. Unlike military personnel they do not receive specific training that would allow them to perform their jobs during the conduct of military operations in a high risk hostile environment. They are not afforded specific training in the use of weapons nor are they expected to use weapons against an enemy force. Civilians that will occupy EE positions are required to sign a Statement of Understanding (DA Form 5244-R) as a condition of appointment to the position. Listed on that form are several important entitlements they will receive in the event of hostilities or mobilization. Some of the key entitlements are: additional allowances related to potential family separation, danger pay, overtime and any pay differential that might be authorized for

the particular geographical area. EE civilians are also entitled to some of the same benefits as military personnel such as medical treatment, issuance of protective equipment and clothing, government quarters and mess.¹⁸

The status of civilian employees during time of crisis or war differs from that of military personnel. While both are expected to be treated and protected equally under the Geneva Conventions, if taken prisoner, the civilian is identified as a noncombatant. EE civilians are issued an appropriate identification card identifying them as noncombatants when they sign the Statement of Understanding acknowledging their assignment to an EE position. However, while their legal status as a prisoner may seem clear, their existence on the battlefield or in an area of military operations may not. EE civilians are normally issued Army Organizational and Individual Equipment (OCIE) as well as Nuclear, Chemical, Biological (NBC) gear. Civilians wear no badges of rank, only insignia marked "U.S.". Consequently, while their legal status may be clearly established, EE civilians add to the "fog of war" and may fall prey to it.¹⁹

Noncombatants are entitled to evacuation from a theater of operations, during time of crisis or hostilities, as determined by the appropriate authority. This includes personnel who are civilian employees of the Army. In that group are career employees and those dependents that occupy U.S. civilian or Local National positions. There are a number of instances where both parents may be employed as career employees, or one career/one non-career employee, and employees that are single parents or sole guardians. Each of these circumstances is compounded when both parents, or a single parent or

sole guardian, is appointed an EE employee, particularly when children are involved. Military personnel, with similar circumstances, are required to make advance arrangements for evacuation of dependents since their primary obligation is military service. Military personnel may be subject to prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for failing to make such arrangements.²⁰ Failure to act by EE civilian employees could result in separation as prescribed by current Federal Personnel Regulations.²¹

Finally, some attention must be given to the willingness of an EE employee to stay on the job, or perform another job on a MOBTDA, during mobilization and war. A survey conducted in USAREUR from March through May 1986, pointed out several concerns regarding the preparation and retention of U.S. citizen EE employees during times of crisis. Survey results indicated that most of the respondents would stay on the job during emergency situations. The following comment from an employee in response to the survey probably speaks for many DAC employees:

When I joined civil service, I took an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Government to perform my assigned tasks. That oath was taken with sincerity to serve my country and protect this nation at all costs...If one reviews the oath civil servants (take) upon entry in the government, with the exception of "bearing arms" in defense of our country it is very similar to the military oath.²²

It is also interesting to note that "Army generals express concern that in the event of war troops in Central Europe may rush home to their families rather than head for the front to protect them."²³ It would appear that a significant amount of education is required to prepare troops and emergency essential civilians for that time to preclude such an incident. Confidence must be gained from

sufficiently exercising the NEO system, in a realistic fashion, to show the personnel that must remain behind that the care and evacuation of their family members is operationally viable. The majority of respondents to the USAREUR survey did not express much confidence in the theater NEO plan. It has been my experience that a significant number of military personnel, civilian employees, and dependents have little confidence in the NEO system. There are several reasons for their discontent. Should a no-notice attack be launched by Warsaw Pact countries there would be little time to evacuate non-combatants. Also, the lines of communication to be traveled by those non-combatants may have been, or will be, interdicted by Warsaw Pact forces.

Civilian respondents also indicated a general, across the board, lack of guidance, information and training exists concerning their wartime positions and the support they could expect to receive. The survey clearly indicated that management has failed to properly utilize the majority of EE employees that were already assigned to MOBTDA's. Survey results also show that 60.6% of the respondents had not participated in alerts or exercises while an additional 12.8% had only participated in alerts. Even more alarming was that almost two-thirds of the respondents never had their mobilization duties and responsibilities explained to them.²⁴

CONCLUSIONS

There is a great potential to use a significant portion of the DAC workforce that is currently expected to evacuate during time of mobilization or war. These personnel will be afforded an opportunity to participate in military mobilization and wartime planning. This

will provide the employee with a greater sense of contribution to the mission of the forward deployed Army forces in Europe. A spin-off from this might be greater emphasis on wartime requirements while performing peacetime missions. Transition planning could be facilitated through more civilians becoming aware of theater mobilization actions and wartime military operations.

As a minimum, deploying forces could be greatly assisted by using the additional EE civilians to prepare selected facilities, equipment, and support systems in advance of their arrival. Prepositioned materiel and equipment could be transitioned to a wartime configuration by the EE civilian workforce and handed off to arriving sustainment forces thus minimizing the time needed to begin operations.

EE civilian employees are another resource that will help support and sustain combat troops. The advantages of the element of time will most likely be on the side of Warsaw Pact forces. Until additional friendly forces can be mobilized and deployed, the United States, and her allies, will have to get the job done with the manpower resources currently available in the theater of operations. Properly equipped and trained EE civilians, as an additional resource, can help to offset the adverse effects the deployment time lag may have. The Army in Europe needs to consider expanding the current number of EE civilian positions to add to the strength of the Total Army force expected to defend and hold against a numerically superior foe. In my opinion, it is self-defeating to have a substantial amount of skilled US citizen employees leave the theater of operations while, at the same time, we are waiting for skilled US Army troops to arrive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to designate and utilize more EE civilians certain actions will have to be taken. First, the Army Component Commander, in Europe, must initiate action to accurately identify specific functions that could be assigned to civilians during mobilization and war. This would include those functions currently being performed by military, those that need to be performed but are currently unresourced, and those that are to be performed by deploying CSS units. Then the command would have to crossmatch skills needed to do those functions against those which are available in the DAC workforce in Europe. Once the MOBTDA has been developed, the individual civilian personnel offices would be required to assign personnel to fill the positions. Employees would be requested to accept assignment to those positions should an emergency require it. They would be required to sign a DA Form 5244-R, Statement of Understanding. Those that refuse to do so could be reassigned to a non-EE position or returned to CONUS. New CONUS recruits and in-country hires would be required to sign the statement before they are assigned to the position. Obviously, this transition phase could be lengthy depending on the amount of voluntary participation from the current in-theater workforce.

However, all the responsibility doesn't rest on the EE civilian's shoulders. The Army chain of command, from HQDA down through the individual peacetime commands in Europe, must strive to meet those shortfalls brought out in the USAREUR survey. Sufficient indoctrination of EE employees must be programmed to include establishment of specific mobilization and wartime duties as well as

participation in exercises that realistically portray their peacetime to wartime transition responsibilities.

Management officials must work closely with their civilian personnel staffs to ensure that the Department of the Army meets its obligation to provide those entitlements agreed to when the EE employee signs the Statement of Understanding. All of this must be accomplished in a timely manner so that EE civilians will be prepared for the transition to their MOBTDAs positions in time of crisis.

While it can be shown there are additional capabilities that can be realized from the establishment of more EE positions, it becomes, in the end, a question of risk. Words from FM 100-10 clearly describe the situation:

The commander must recognize that in planning support for combat operations he will be continuously involved in performing risk analyses. That is, he will be continuously balancing the benefits derived from a particular support plan versus the risks involved. He must continuously ask himself if the concept is supportable and if the responsiveness of the support provided outweighs the risks involved.

Given the conclusions and recommendations I have discussed, there are at least two important risks to consider. First, without additional in-theater manpower, there is the risk that NATO forces will be unable to hold until additional reinforcements arrive from CONUS. The other risk becomes apparent when you increase the number of EE civilians in a theater of operations under attack. Adequate protection must be provided to this noncombatant workforce. The latter risk appears to be more attractive when you consider that, by accepting it, the probability of the greater risk (i.e. insufficient defensive strength) could be diminished.

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